

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 and 22 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 22 have been objected to because of informalities. Claims 1-8, 11, 19, 20, and 22 have been rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatenable over Lehtimäki (US Patent 5,953,666) (hereinafter "Lehtimäki") in view of ETSI TS 101 504 V8.0.0 (2000-04) (hereinafter "ETSI"). Claims 9 and 10 have been rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatenable over Lehtimäki (in view of ETSI, and further in view of Meyer (US 6,577,645) (hereinafter "Meyer"). Claims 12-18 have been allowed.

In response to the Examiners objection to claim 22, claim 22 has been amended to depend from claim 20, rather than canceled claim 21. This amendment to claim 22 was made to correct the claim dependency, not in response to any rejections.

In response to the Examiners objection to claim 1, "of" has been inserted before "potential message" in line 4. This amendment to claim 1 was made to correct an inadvertent error, not in response to any rejections.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 11, 12, 18, and 20 have been amended to delete the words "the step(s) of". These amendments to claims 1, 5, 6, 11, 12, 18, and 20 were made to make the claims more clear, not in response to any rejections.

Prior Art Rejections

As mentioned above, claims 1-8, 11, 19, 20, and 22 have been rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatenable over Lehtimäki in view of ETSI. In rejecting these claims, the Examiner alleges that Lehtimäki discloses methods of synchronization of an in-band signal. The Examiner then states that Lehtimäki is "silent on the details of his synchronization operation." The Examiner then states that ETSI "discloses synchronizing the signaling based on collected information, and continuing to collect signaling information and using the collected inband

signaling information to maintain the plurality potential message channels while system is synchronized for resynchronization if synchronization is lost." As is described below Applicant asserts that the cited references do not make the claims unpatentable.

Claim 1 recites a method of maintaining synchronization of an inband signaling system comprising including "collecting inband signaling information from samples in a signaling channel", "using the collected inband signaling information to form a plurality of potential message channels", "determining which of the plurality of potential message channels relates to a desired message channel", "synchronizing the signaling system based on the collected inband signaling information", and "continuing to collect inband signaling information and using the collected inband signaling information to maintain the plurality potential message channels while the signaling system is synchronized for use in resynchronizing the signaling system when synchronization is lost."

ETSI does not teach or suggest "continuing to collect inband signaling information and using the collected inband signaling information to maintain the plurality potential message channels while the signaling system is synchronized for use in resynchronizing the signaling system when synchronization is lost," as recited in claim 1. The closest thing Applicant can find in section 8.4.1 of ETSI is the statement that the "monitoring of TFO Frame or TFO Message synchronisation shall be a continuous process" and "in all error cases, the receiver shall investigate, if sync has been lost due to octet slip, phase adjustment or other events and shall try to resynchronize as fast as possible." (ETSI, section 8.4.1, page 27). At best, ETSI appear to teach that the monitoring of TFO message synchronization should be a continuous process. The reason for this is so a system will immediately know when synchronization has been lost. ETSI does not teach or suggest continuing to collect inband signaling information and maintaining a

plurality of potential message channels for use in resynchronizing when synchronization is lost. If the Examiner disagrees with this reading of ETSI, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner specifically identify where ETSI discloses this.

For at least the reasons recited above, Applicant asserts that amended claim 1, and all claims depending from claim 1, are allowable over the cited prior art.

Claim 19 recites a TFO inband signaling synchronization system including "a storage device that maintains a plurality of sample grids, wherein samples are collected from a signaling channel and are used to fill the plurality of sample grids" and "a detector that detects the presence of an inband signaling channel based on the contents of the plurality of sample grids, wherein a detected inband signaling channel is used to synchronize devices to facilitate tandem free operation, and wherein the collection of samples continues during synchronization to maintain the plurality of sample grids for facilitation of rapid resynchronization."

Applicant asserts that neither Lehtimaki nor ETSI teach or suggest the continuing collection of samples during synchronization to maintain the plurality of sample grids for facilitation of rapid resynchronization, as recited in claim 19. Applicant therefore asserts that claim 19 is allowable over the cited prior art.

Claim 20 recites a method of maintaining synchronization in devices in an inband signaling system including "providing a synchronization technique for synchronizing one or more devices in the inband signaling system, wherein the synchronization technique involves the collection of bits from a signaling channel and filling a plurality of sample grids with the collected bits to provide a plurality of possible sample grids", "applying the synchronization technique to the inband signaling system to synchronize the one or more devices", and "continuing to apply the synchronization technique while the one or more devices are

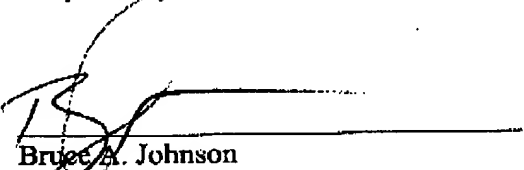
synchronized in order to facilitate rapid resynchronization of the one or more devices if synchronization is lost."

Applicant asserts that neither Lehtimäki nor ETSI teach or suggest continuing to apply a synchronization technique while the devices are synchronized in order to facilitate rapid resynchronization of the devices if synchronization is lost, as recited in claim 20. Applicant therefore asserts that claim 20, and dependent claim 22, are allowable over the cited prior art.

It is respectfully submitted that all claims are patentable over the prior art. It is further more respectfully submitted that all other matters have been addressed and remedied and that the application is in form for allowance. Should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Bruce A. Johnson, Applicants' Attorney at 512-301-9900 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

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